

WaKIDS

Washington Kindergarten Inventory
of Developing Skills

What is WaKIDS?

WaKIDS is a voluntary pilot program for the 2010-11 school year that brings families, teachers and early learning providers together to support each child's learning and transition into public schools. Authorized in 2009 by the State Legislature, WaKIDS was developed in collaboration with a diverse group of stakeholders, including elementary teachers and principals, special education specialists, early care and education providers, parents, and representatives from Washington's Tribal communities.

Who is participating in WaKIDS?

In May 2010, more than 50 school districts applied to be part of the voluntary pilot of WaKIDS. 3,000 children from 120 classrooms around the state will participate in the WaKIDS pilot during the 2010-11 school year. A list of participating schools can be found at www.del.wa.gov/wakids.

How will WaKIDS work?

Before school starts, kindergarten teachers will meet with families and early learning providers to talk about each child's strengths and needs. In the fall, kindergarten teachers will complete a more formal assessment of each child's skills (social and emotional, physical, cognitive and linguistic skills). Early learning providers and kindergarten teachers will continue meeting throughout the school year to develop new ways to collaborate and share information.

How will the WaKIDS pilot help teachers and children?

Kindergarten teachers will use the information from WaKIDS to improve classroom teaching and tailor their instruction to the individual needs of each child. In addition, WaKIDS will help determine best practices for engaging with families and inform decisions at the community, district and state levels for future investments in early learning.

Will kindergarten entry for students still be the same?

Yes. All children who have had their 5th birthday by Aug. 31 may enter kindergarten. The purpose of WaKIDS is to provide families, early learning providers and kindergarten teachers a more formal process for sharing information, so that children receive the support they need to be successful in school. It is not a tool to determine whether a child should enter kindergarten.

Why is our state doing this pilot program?

Each year, 70,000 children enter kindergarten with a varying degree of skills. We want to know what works best in supporting successful transitions from early learning into the K-12 school system.

Who is leading the WaKIDS pilot?

The [Department of Early Learning](#) and [Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction](#), in consultation with [Thrive by Five Washington](#), are partnering with school districts from around the state to pilot this program. Private funding for WaKIDS is generously provided by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.



Need more information?

Please visit WaKIDS at www.del.wa.gov/wakids or e-mail WaKIDS@k12.wa.us.